

# THE BUREAU OF CATHOLIC INDIAN MISSIONS.

This is a powerful organization for promoting Catholicism among Indians, and to this end it seeks to secure the largest possible number of Catholics in the Government Indian service. As a result of these efforts many Indian Agents, their clerks and other employees are Catholics. It has made a special point of securing the control of as many government schools as practicable, several of which are entirely officered by Catholics, and are as absolutely parochial schools for the distinct propagation of Catholicism, as if they were supported by Church Mission funds, instead of public funds. The Roman Catholicism is the basis of all the instruction, the mass is celebrated in some of them, and special pains are taken to drill the pupils in all the rites and ceremonies of the Catholic Church. This Bureau has accomplished its greatest work, perhaps, in procuring immense sums of public money for the support of its mission schools. The growth of these appropriations is seen in the following exhibit: The amounts secured have been as follows: 1886, \$118,343; 1887, \$194,635; 1888, \$221,163; 1889, \$347,672; 1890, \$356,957; 1891, \$363,349.

The Bureau is in close contact with the Cardinal and all the hierarchy, and can summon to Washington at short notice very powerful support—archbishops, bishops, priests, and influential laymen to wait upon the President, or to lobby with Senators and members of Congress in order to carry through any scheme it has on hand, such as securing new legislation, influencing appointments, or defeating measures which they regard as in any way detrimental to the interests of Catholicism.

During the last administration, the Superintendent of Indian Schools, Mr. Riley, was a Catholic, as was the Chief of the Education Division in the Indian Bureau, his first assistant, and principal clerk. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs was subservient to Catholic interests, and in fact the Indian Bureau was completely dominated by the Catholic Bureau, in consequence of which the government Indian schools were neglected, and the Catholic schools fostered in every possible way.

When the present Commissioner announced his intention of developing a system of non-partisan, non-sectarian government Indian schools, modeled after the public schools, the Catholic Bureau immediately became alarmed, and entered upon a most vigorous campaign to obstruct his work. The Catholic Congress assembled in Baltimore appointed a strong delegation, with Bishop Ireland at its head, to wait upon the President, and demand that he should recall the nomination of General Morgan, which he declined to do.

The head of the Catholic Bureau then filed charges before the Senate Committee, accusing the Commissioner of falsehood, bigotry and dishonesty, and a tremendous outside pressure was brought to bear upon individual Senators to induce them to vote against his confirmation. The attempt was made to combine the Democrats against him as a party measure, but without success. An effort was then made to secure enough votes to defeat him from among Republican Senators, and among those thus influenced, were Pierce, of North Dakota, and Ingalls, of Kansas, both of whom have just failed of reelection. But notwithstanding all these efforts, the Commissioner was confirmed.

In the papers submitted to the Senate the Catholic Bureau made a violent attack upon government schools, with a view of preventing an increase of appropriations for them, but Congress voted nearly half a million dollars more for Indian education than ever before, raising the amount to nearly two million dollars.

During the past year articles emanating from Washington, and presumably inspired by the Catholic Bureau, assailing the Commissioner's policy and personal character, have been widely published, and apparently no pains have been spared to weaken his hands and destroy his work. Indians have been instructed not to patronize the government schools, and have been told that if their children went to these institutions they would die and go to hell. A petition drawn up in Washington was sent to a certain tribe and circulated for signatures, protesting against the establishing of a government school among them, but when questioned about it, the Indians did not seem to know what it was they had signed.

When the Sioux troubles arose an effort was made to throw the blame upon the Commissioner, and "Father Craft," who was once expelled from the Sioux country for inciting the Indians to disloyalty, published a pretended interview with Chief Red Cloud, complaining bitterly of the Interior Department. This interview has been pronounced spurious by Dr. Bland, the personal friend and correspondent of Red Cloud. Father Craft, in a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, lays the blame of the trouble upon "the blunders and cruelties of the Commissioner."

The Catholics, having refused to accept the very liberal award of money made for parochial schools, withheld their contracts until they became seriously embarrassed for money, and then attempted to throw the responsibility upon the Commissioner.

Resolutions inspired, and probably framed by those connected with the Catholic Bureau, calling for the investigation of the Indian Bureau, have been presented to Congress, and are now before the Committee on Rules.

This brief recital of the principal events in this effort of the Roman hierarchy to strike down a public official for refusing to promote their scheme for diverting millions of dollars of public money into the coffers of the Catholic Church, for the propagation of Catholicism, has awakened wide public interest.

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